-20-

What is claimed is:

1. In an interactive information distribution system including a network of provider equipment and subscriber equipment, apparatus comprising:

   a plurality of servers coupled to respective subscriber equipment, each of said servers having a primary storage partition for storing a local portion of video assets, each of said servers having a secondary storage partition for storing at least some of a remaining portion of said video assets; and

   a manager, coupled to each of said plurality of servers for routing video assets between said servers in response to video asset requests, and for migrating video assets between storage partitions in response to a video asset request rate traversing a threshold rate.

2. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein:

   said manager allocates said video assets to at least one of said plurality of servers for storage on said primary storage partitions when said asset request rate traverses said threshold rate; and

   said manager stores said video assets on said secondary storage partition when said asset request rate does not traverse said threshold rate.

3. The apparatus of claim 2, wherein:

   in response to an asset request from subscriber equipment, said manager distributes to said requesting subscriber equipment the requested video asset from a server storing the requested video asset.

4. The apparatus of claim 3, wherein said manager comprises:

   a content manager, coupled to said plurality of servers for tracking, inventorying and administering said asset request rate and said threshold rate for each of said video assets;

   a stream session manager, coupled to said plurality of servers and linked with said content manager, for distributing streams of video assets to subscriber equipment requesting said video assets; and

a content session manager, coupled to said content manager and said plurality of servers, for receiving asset requests from said stream session manager via said content manager.

5. The apparatus of claim 4, further comprising

an inter-server network, coupled between each of said plurality of servers, for transmitting and receiving said video assets; and

an access network, coupled between each of said plurality of servers and said respective subscriber equipment, for receiving asset requests and transmitting video assets.

6. The apparatus of claim 5, wherein a server, identified by said content manager as storing a requested video asset, provides said requested video asset to requesting subscriber equipment via said access network.

7. The apparatus of claim 6, wherein said requested video asset is provided to said access network via an intervening server.

8. The apparatus of claim 7, wherein said stream session manager, causes transmission of said video asset across said access network to said subscriber equipment.

9. The apparatus of claim 8, wherein said video asset is stored on said primary storage partition or secondary storage partition of at least one of said plurality of said servers correspondingly linked to said subscriber equipment.

10. In an interactive information distribution system including a network of provider equipment and subscriber equipment, apparatus comprising:

a plurality of local servers having a primary storage partition;

a remote server having a primary storage partition and a secondary storage partition; and

a manager, coupled to each of said plurality of local servers and said remote server, for routing video assets between said remote server, said

plurality of servers and said subscriber equipment in response to video asset requests, and for migrating video assets between storage partitions in response to a video asset request rate traversing a threshold rate.

5   11. The apparatus of claim 10, wherein

said manager allocates said video assets to at least one of said plurality of local servers for storage on said primary storage partitions when said asset request rate exceeds said threshold rate; and

said manager stores said video assets on said secondary storage partition

10   of said remote server when said asset request rate does not exceed said threshold rate.

12. The apparatus of claim 11, wherein:

in response to an asset request from subscriber equipment, said manager

15   distributes to said requesting subscriber equipment the requested video asset from a local server storing the requested video asset.

13. The apparatus of claim 13, wherein said manager comprises:

a content manager, coupled to said plurality of local servers and said

20   remote server for tracking, inventorying and administering said asset request rate and said threshold rate for each of said video assets;

a stream session manager, coupled to said plurality of local servers and said remote server, and linked with said content manager, for distributing streams of video assets to subscriber equipment requesting said video assets;

25   and

a content session manager, coupled to said content manager and said remote server, for receiving asset requests from said stream session manager via said content manager.

30   14. The apparatus of claim 13, further comprising:

an inter-server network coupled between each of said plurality of local servers and said remote server, for transmitting and receiving said video assets; and

an access network coupled between each of said plurality of local servers and said respective subscriber equipment for receiving asset requests and transmitting video assets.

15. The apparatus of claim 14, wherein said stream session manager causes transmission of said video asset across said access network to said subscriber equipment.

16. The apparatus of claim 15, wherein said content session manager causes transmission of said video asset across said access network via an intervening server

17. The apparatus of claim 16, wherein said local server transmits said video asset across said access network to said subscriber equipment.

18. The apparatus of claim 16, wherein said video asset is stored on said primary storage partition of at least one of said plurality of said servers correspondingly linked to said subscriber equipment.

19. In an interactive information distribution system comprising a plurality of servers coupled to respective subscriber equipment, each of said servers having a primary storage partition for storing a first portion of video assets and a secondary storage partition for storing at least some of a remaining portion of said video assets, said servers providing video assets to respective subscriber equipment in response to subscriber requests, a method comprising the steps of:

   determining an asset request rate for each of said video assets stored in each server;

   comparing said determined asset request rates with respective threshold rates; and

   in the case of video assets stored on a secondary partition having a request rate exceeding said respective threshold rate, migrating said video

assets stored on said secondary storage partition to a corresponding primary storage partition.

20. The method of claim 19, wherein in the case of said determined asset request rate for video assets stored in a primary storage partition being below a respective threshold rate, migrating said video assets from said primary partition to a corresponding secondary partition.

21. The method of claim 20, further comprising the step of removing duplicates of said video assets from each of said primary storage partitions.

22. The method of claim 20, further comprising the steps of:

identifying a server having a primary partition storing a requested video asset;

causing said identified server to begin providing said requested video asset; and

transmitting said video asset through an access network to said subscriber equipment initiating said asset request.

23. The method of claim 22, wherein said identified server is coupled directly to said requesting subscriber equipment.

24. The method of claim 23, wherein said identified server is coupled to said requesting subscriber via an intervening server, said identified server communicating with said intervening server via an inter-server network.